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YUGOSLAV AGENCY TO PUBLISH COMMERCIAL REVIEW;
DISCUSS SUPPLY PROBLEMS, PRICE VARIATIONS

REVIEWS PROGRESS OF YUGOSLAV COMMERCE -- Zagreb, Borba, 23 May 51

Beginning with June the Yugoslav Commercial Agency will publish the Trgovinski Pregled (Commercial Review) in Belgrade. The Trgovinski Pregled will be issued every Wednesday, and will discuss commercial problems, especially prices.

Freeing itself more and more from the distribution system, Yugoslav commerce has progressed considerably within a short period. Commercial enterprises are displaying greater initiative and are independently entering the market. They are discovering sources for purchasing goods in consumer demand quickly and easily, and are decisively stating their needs, particularly in assortment and quality, to production enterprises and other producers.

This was brought about by widespread decentralization of the commercial network, which is no longer bound by various administrative measures, inflexible distribution plans, and similar measures which previously regulated trade. Commercial enterprise initiative also developed particularly after the introduction of a new method of remuneration in trade, by which enterprises became materially interested in realizing more and more trade and steadily lowering production costs.

Of substantial importance also is the transition to the free sale and free formation of prices of industrial consumers' goods and agricultural products. The commercial network has thus obtained broad potentialities for increasing trade, particularly for improving trade between villages and cities, and thus supplying the public better.

All of this presents fairly complex problems to Yugoslav commerce as a whole, and especially to each commercial and production enterprise. The basic problem is for production and commerce to unite as quickly and as economically as possible. To retain administrative ties which have heretofore frequently proved economically unsound would be harmful to both enterprises and consumers.

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The ties must be exclusively economic ones. But these cannot be achieved immediately, nor can they be determined by isolated srez, cities, or even republics, which has been proved by past experience in free trade and the free formation of prices.

The great variation in prices between different areas is a consequence of unsatisfactory connections between production and commerce. Prices were frequently determined according to supply and demand on the local market, or the functioning of economic laws in individual economic centers rather than in the nation as a whole. Such a situation permitted middlemen, purchasers, and their representatives to take advantage of the variation in prices, resell various products, and receive unwarranted and frequently very high profits, thereby increasing prices.

Yugoslav commerce as a whole is not uniform, because of the disparity in the economic development of the republics and individual regions in the past, and because of the disparity in the distribution of industrial and agricultural production throughout Yugoslavia. From this was derived the local tendency to establish separate markets locally, causing still greater variations and contributing to a greater disparity in prices.

Such weaknesses are gradually being removed. The prices of agricultural and industrial products in the free market are gradually becoming uniform on a general level which represents the real ratio between supply and demand throughout the nation. Contributing considerably to this is the Information Service of the Yugoslav Commercial Agency which was established 6 weeks ago. This service, through its information network, has aided the commercial and production enterprises in becoming familiar with the market situation, consumer demands, prices, and selling conditions. The Information Service has enabled trade organizations, without any administrative measures by the state, to obtain better and more varied goods more quickly, and to place them at the disposal of the consumer quickly.

Commercial agencies heretofore made their reports on radio broadcasts, and at times through daily newspapers. These reports were quite incomplete and limited mainly to quoting prices in various economic centers. Enterprises were unable to draw concrete conclusions from these reports, so that they could sell their goods where conditions were most satisfactory, and the commercial network could not intervene by moving large quantities of goods to places where prices were higher.

Henceforth, the Commercial Agency, in its weekly newspaper, will review wholesale and retail prices in all important markets, present an analysis and commentary on the market situation, interpret new measures in commerce, publicize special area information, and in special articles explain all technical trade matters.

Commercial and production enterprises will thus obtain a broad review of the situation in all Yugoslav markets. They will come closer to the market, better sense consumer needs, and produce and sell goods of the quality and assortment which present conditions permit Yugoslavia to have and to sell.

PRICES VARY CONSIDERABLY -- Zagreb, Vjesnik, 3 Apr 51

The Information Service on Market Opportunities and Prices of Industrial Items, located in the most important cities in Yugoslavia, has been instrumental in clarifying supply problems in the cities and in districts economically dependent on the cities. Wholesale and retail commercial networks, and price

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offices of city and srez people's councils and production enterprises are quickly informed regarding the quantity of goods in individual markets, so that they can apportion their work and production according to existing circumstances and consumer demand.

Considerable variations in the prices of some industrial items in individual cities frequently arise because some commercial enterprises were influenced by a momentary situation of greater or lesser demand for the items concerned. They did not take into account that too low prices would quickly exhaust their inventory, or that their goods would remain unsold because of unjustifiably high prices which were not in accord with the general level of prices.

Some recent examples show there is still a tendency to set separate "political prices" in some cities, or generally not to follow prices and the situation in other markets, thus creating conditions for speculating in the purchase and resale of goods. An ordinary water glass (pressed in two parts) costs 50 dinars in Belgrade, 60 in Osijek, 120 in Rijeka, and 40 in Sarajevo. Window glass (2 millimeters thick) is being sold for 420 dinars in Zagreb; 500 in Rijeka; 600 in Osijek, Split, Subotica, and Novi Sad; 320 dinars in Skoplje, and 210 dinars in Bitolj.

Laundry soap (from 60 to 62 percent fatty acids) is 340 to 350 dinars in Zagreb, Split, and Osijek; 450 to 600 in Rijeka, 280 in Subotica, and 325 to 400 in Belgrade, Skoplje, and Nis. The prices of enamelware are not uniform because of the lack of interest or satisfactory marketing in Mostar, Bitolj, and Maribor, where a 3-liter enamel pot is being sold for 340 to 360 dinars, while a shortage of this item makes the price 445 dinars in Rijeka, 500 in Sarajevo, and over 1,000 in Banjaluka. Instead of the commercial network moving goods from areas of little demand to areas of greater demand as soon as possible, they permit unreasonably low prices on the one hand, and at the same time increase prices in other cities.

These are not the only examples of unwarranted variations in the prices of industrial goods. If the price offices had stronger connections with the commercial enterprises, such price variations would not result. Price offices are responsible if the commercial network is slow or fails to act on the Information Service Reports.

PRICES VARY FOR FARM TOOLS, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS -- Zagreb, Vjesnik, 2 Apr 51

A significant variation exists in the prices of agricultural tools and construction materials in different cities. Price levels in some towns do not reflect the true condition of the market, and are not in proper ratio to the general level of prices of these articles in Yugoslavia.

Recently axes were 270 dinars in Belgrade, 300 to 450 in Zagreb, 380 in Rijeka, 600 in Titograd, and 675 in Osijek. Hoes were 265 dinars in Zagreb, 290 in Ljubljana, 380 in Rijeka, and 200 in Kragujevac. Scythes were 350 dinars in Osijek, 250 in Rijeka, 400 in Subotica, and 154 in Bitolj. Sickles were 140 dinars in Zagreb and Osijek, 200 in Rijeka, and 50 to 55 in Novi Sad and Belgrade.

Pine boards (30 percent panel pine and 70 percent grade B) were 9,000 dinars in Zagreb, 10,000 in Belgrade, 7,000 in Split, 12,000 in Osijek, 13,000 in Banjaluka, and 6,500 in Sarajevo. Nails (6 centimeters long) are 300 dinars in Belgrade, Split, and Osijek, and 400 dinars in Nis and Banjaluka.

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The market is well supplied with bluestone, but there is a significant difference in its price. Bluestone is selling in Banjaluka at 70 dinars, 150 in Osijek and Rijeka, and 100 in Zagreb, Maribor, and Novi Sad. Since a sufficient quantity of axle grease is for sale, prices are approximately uniform for this item: 50 dinars in Belgrade and Sarajevo; 70 in Zagreb, Rijeka, and Osijek; and 80 in Bitolj.

Commercial enterprises and price offices should follow more closely the development of prices and market opportunities not only in their own towns, but in Yugoslavia generally, to achieve a proper ratio of prices throughout Yugoslavia as soon as possible.

LOWER PRICES ON BETTER SUPPLIED MARKETS IN BELGRADE -- Belgrade, Politika,
28 Mar 51

Within the past week an abundance of produce has been available in Belgrade markets, although prices are still fairly high and not uniform. Prices are considerably lower on those markets which are better supplied. At present they are lowest at the Kaleniceva market, where potatoes are selling at 60 to 70 dinars per kilogram, beans at 80, greens at 100, apples at 100, sliced cheese at 250, cream at 500, dressed poultry at 200, and live poultry at 150 to 200. Prices are higher at the Bajlonova market, where potatoes are 70 to 80 dinars per kilogram, beans from 70 to 90, greens 140, apples from 100 to 130, cheese 280, dressed poultry from 250 to 280, and live poultry from 200 to 220. Prices are still higher at the Zeleni Venac market, with cheese selling at 250 to 300 dinars, cream 600, and live poultry 250 dinars a kilogram.

The prices for some times are identical in these markets. For example, lard is 500 dinars per kilogram, oil 500, butter 800, goat cheese 400, milk 50, smoked meat from 480 to 500, eggs from 14 to 15 dinars each, and yellow turnips 120 dinars per kilogram.

Spinach was the chief commodity on sale yesterday in the stores of commercial enterprises, state farms, and cooperatives. Prices varied. The "Pancevacki Rit" Farm is selling spinach at 10 dinars per kilogram, the "Slavijska" Commercial Enterprise at 12, and the "Smederevka" Enterprise at 15. Private producers are selling spinach at 15 to 20 dinars. Spinach is abundant in all markets and can be obtained without waiting in line.

On 27 March the Municipal Slaughterhouse brought a small quantity of meat to the Bajlonova market. This meat was sold out quickly. A long line was waiting in front of the market, where pork was selling at 180 dinars per kilogram.

A long line forms early in the morning in front of the Municipal Dairy store in the Kaleniceva and Zeleni Venac markets, and milk is quickly sold out at 40 dinars a liter. The demand for milk is very great. If milk supplies increase, they will have a considerable influence on decreasing the price of milk sold by private producers.

Prices in state farm stores are as follows: 380 dinars per kilogram for lard, 350 for pork sausage, 360 dinars for bacon, 200 dinars for cracklings, and 100 dinars for chitterlings.

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